



PROGRESS UPDATE

Anniston Chemical Agent Disposal Facility

(as of September 23, 2003)

Anniston, Calhoun County Safer Following Seven Weeks of Chemical Agent Operations

The Anniston community and Calhoun County are safer today following six and a half weeks of safe operations at the U.S. Army's Anniston Chemical Agent Disposal Facility (ANCDF). Each day of operations brings the U.S. Army closer to meeting its goal of safely and permanently destroying all chemical weapons now stored at Anniston Army Depot. History was made on September 8 when the first chemical weapons storage igloo was emptied. A second igloo was emptied eight days later.

Where We Are

- **M55 Rockets Safely Transported** – More than 160 Enhanced Onsite Containers (EONC) of M55 rockets from storage bunkers to the ANCDF where they are being destroyed. Transportation of weapons is currently being done after 4:30 p.m. until an hour before dusk during the week and from 8 a.m. to an hour before dusk on weekends. Transportation hours will change when final community Chemical Stockpile Emergency Preparedness activities are completed in October.
- **Rocket Processing** – More than 3,656 GB-filled M55 rockets have been destroyed since disposal operations began August 9. Once rockets enter the ANCDF, they are drained of chemical agent, chopped into eight pieces by the Rocket Shear Machine, and fed into the Deactivation Furnace (DFS). Once in the DFS, the rocket and its parts are heated to about 1,100 degrees Fahrenheit where any residual agent, energetics, and the fiberglass firing and shipping tube are destroyed.
- **Liquid Agent Destruction** – The Liquid Incinerator (LIC) destroyed chemical agent for the first time on Sunday, August 31. During this and the LIC's subsequent operations, approximately 3,704 gallons (or 33,669 pounds) of GB nerve agent have been safely and irreversibly destroyed.
- **Work Force** – The ANCDF work force has eclipsed 4.5 million safe hours without a lost-time injury. According to the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), this is comparable to an individual working more than 2,000 years without suffering an injury that would cause one to miss a day of work. The ANCDF work force has fewer injuries than attorneys, librarians, or teachers. Based on safety statistics established by the National Safety Council, ANCDF is one of the safest places in the country to work.



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Challenges We've Faced

- **Alarms (Chemical Agent Readings)** – ANCDF's Automated Continuous Air Monitoring System (ACAMS) has been operating well, and has responded several times to interferences. Most of the problems were the result of a roofing sealant being used on the Munitions Demilitarization Building. Monitoring systems ensure the workers inside the facility are protected. The systems are highly sensitive and can detect extremely small amounts of sarin in the air, as well as small amounts of other substances, such as truck exhaust, finger nail polish, or perfumes. As an additional safety measure, false readings are verified with a back-up monitoring system called the Depot Area Air Monitoring Station (DAAMS).
- **Recent Alerts** – Over the past month, there have been “positive” alarms for sarin, but only in areas such as the LIC and Explosive Containment rooms, where one expects to find chemical agent present. These areas are under engineering controls (negative pressure) that effectively protect the workers, community, and environment. There have been no confirmed alarms outside of engineering controls, or outside of controlled ventilation areas.
- **Heated Discharge Conveyor** – The ANCDF Heated Discharge Conveyor, part of the Deactivation Furnace System, jammed during rocket operations on September 9. The conveyor required maintenance, and halted rocket processing for two days. The conveyor has been returned to service and is operating under normal conditions.

Where We'll Be

Surrounding County Public Briefing Scheduled:

- **Cleburne County** - September 25, 6:00 p.m., City of Heflin Recreation Center.
- **Talladega County** – October 14, 6:00 p.m., Talladega County Courthouse (Second Floor)
- **Clay County** – October 16, 6:00 p.m., Farmers Market (tentative)

Public briefings in Etowah and St. Clair County are being planned.

Anniston Army Depot is located on 15,300 acres just outside of Anniston, Alabama, which is located 64 miles from Birmingham and 91 miles from Atlanta, Georgia. Since the mid-1960s, Anniston Chemical Activity has been responsible for storing chemical weapons. The Chemical Activity Commander is LTC Robert E. Jones and the ANCDF Site Project Manager is Timothy K. Garrett.

For more information, contact Mike Abrams (256-238-1652 ext. 235), Anniston Outreach Office (256-238-0120) or Donovan Mager (256-238-0721 ext. 137) in the public affairs office at the ANCDF.